

Recommendations

on the TACs for
pelagic species in the Baltic in 2007

This paper contains the BS RAC recommendations on the TACs for the pelagic species in the Baltic in 2007. The paper is based on the decisions taken by the Executive Committee at its meeting 28 August 2006 in Stockholm.

Herring in Subdivisions 22-24

The BS RAC recommends a TAC of 52,500 tonnes.

Herring in Subdivisions 25-27, 28.2, 29 and 32

According to the scientific advice from ACFM, the TAC in 2007 could be increased by 28% to 164,000 tonnes. The BS RAC recommends an increase of 15% in the TAC, i.e. a TAC of 147,200 tonnes, in order to stabilise fishing opportunities from one year to the next.

Herring in Subdivision 28.1 (Gulf of Riga)

The TAC for herring in Subdivision 28.1 was not discussed at the pelagic working group meeting 22-23 August in Klaipeda, because there were no representatives present from the Estonian and Latvian fisheries sector.

At the Executive Committee meeting 28 August 2006, representatives from the Latvian and Estonian catching sector argued for only a modest reduction in the TAC of no more than 2,000 tonnes, based on a continuously strong herring stock. This would correspond to a TAC of 38,000 tonnes in 2007.

The Executive Committee took note of the Estonian and Latvian position, but was not prepared to take a decision on the proposal.

Herring in Subdivisions 30-31

The BS RAC recommends a TAC of 105,340 tonnes, i.e. an increase of 15% compared to the TAC in 2006.

The position of the RAC is based on the fact that a) the stock is very strong, b) the fishing mortality has been low since 2001 and the SSB is at a very high level, c) the fishery for herring in Subdivisions 30-31 is a directed fishery with no or very low level of by-catch of sprat and d) an increase in the outtake of herring from the Baltic can reduce the problem of dioxin.

Sprat in Subdivisions 22-32

The BS RAC recommends a TAC of 538,200 tonnes. This corresponds to an increase of 15% in the TAC compared to 2006. The stock has been very strong for many years and fishermen have also experienced a very good fishery in 2006. In addition, the RAC is concerned about the negative effect which a very big sprat stock could have on the cod stocks due to predation of the cod eggs.

The Pelagic WG has been informed by the Commission that Russia has expressed concern about possible by-catches of herring in the sprat fishery. It is the opinion of the BS RAC that the by-catch level in the EU sprat fishery in the Baltic is rather limited, because the fishery takes place mostly in deep water where a directed clean sprat fishery is possible. Moreover, by-catches of herring in the EU sprat fishery must be counted against the herring quota.